

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A method for producing ~~chewing gum granules~~ and compressed gum products, wherein the method comprises at least the steps of:
 - a) feeding a gum composition including at least gum base into an extruder;
 - b) pressurizing the gum composition in the extruder;
 - c) extruding the gum composition through a die plate;
 - d) cutting the extruded gum composition into gum granules in a liquid filled chamber, said cut gum granules include at least gum base in the range of ~~71-86~~ to 99% Wt. based on a total weight of the granules, together with at least one taste ingredient, said die plate having openings of at least two different sizes to simultaneously obtain granules with different average diameters; in the range of 0.1 to 29% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules and; said method further comprising the steps of
 - e) conveying at least the extruded gum granules to a tableting-tablet pressing machine; and
 - f) pressing at least the gum granules of two different sizes into compressed chewing gum tablets in the tablet pressing machine.

2. (canceled):

3. (currently amended): A method according to claim 21, wherein the gum granules include gum base in the range of 91 to 99% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

4. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the gum composition in step a) is gum base.

5. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the taste ingredient is a sweetener.

6. (original): A method according to claim 5, wherein the gum composition is mixed with sweetener during step b).

7. (original): A method according to claim 5, wherein the granules comprise sweetener in the range of 0.1 to 15% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

8. (original): A method according to claim 7, wherein the granules comprise sweetener in the range of 0.2 to 10% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

9. (original): A method according to claim 8, wherein the granules comprise sweetener in the range of 0.5 to 4.9% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

10. (original): A method according to claim 5, wherein the sweetener is an intense sweetener.

11. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the taste ingredient is a flavour.

12. (original): A method according to claim 11, wherein the gum composition is mixed with flavour during step b).

13. (original): A method according to claim 11, wherein the granules comprise flavour in the range of 0.1 to 15% Wt., based on the total weight of the granules.

14. (original): A method according to claim 13, wherein the granules comprise flavour in the range of 1 to 10% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

15. (original): A method according to claim 14, wherein the granules comprise flavour in the range of 2 to 5% Wt. based on the total weight of the granules.

16. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein an average diameter of the cut granules is in a range from 0.1 mm to 3.1 mm,

17. (original): A method according to claim 16, wherein an average diameter of the cut granules is in a range from 0.25 to 2.5 mm,

18. (original): A method according to claim 17, wherein an average diameter of the cut granules is in a range from 0.3 to 2.1 mm.

19. (canceled):

20. (original): A method according to claim 19, wherein a first fraction of the extruded granules has a first average diameter, and a second fraction of the extruded granules has a second average diameter larger than said first average diameter.

21. (original): A method according to claim 20, wherein the first average diameter is in a range from 0.1 to 0.95 mm,

22. (original): A method according to claim 21, wherein the first average diameter is in a range from 0.25 to 0.9 mm,

23. (original): A method according to claim 20, wherein the second average diameter is in a range from 0.6 to 1.9 mm,

24. (original): A method according to claim 23, wherein the second average diameter is in the range from 0.8 to 1.4 mm.

25. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of substantially removing surface liquid from the extruded granules.

26. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of classifying the extruded granules.

27. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of mixing the extruded granules with one or more ingredients selected from the group consisting of flavours, sweeteners, intense sweeteners, colouring agents, fillers, and tabletting aids.

28. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the tablets comprise gum base in the range from 28 to 70% Wt. based on the total weight of the tablets.

29. (original): A method according to claim 28, wherein the tablets comprise gum base preferably in the range from 30 to 45% Wt. based on the total weight of the tablets.

30. (original): A method according to claim 29, wherein the tablets comprise gum base in the range from 31 to 39% Wt. based on the total weight of the tablets.

31. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of coating the compressed tablets, the coating mainly comprises one or more coatings or ingredients selected from the group consisting of cornstarch, sugar compounds, polyols, cellulose ethers, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, acrylic polymers and copolymers, sugarless/sugarfree coatings, sweeteners, flavours, waxes, and colours.

32. (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of coating the granules, the coating mainly comprises one or more coatings or ingredients selected from the group consisting of magnesium stearate, cornstarch, sugar compounds, polyols, cellulose ethers, acrylic polymers and copolymers, sugarless/sugarfree coatings, sweeteners, flavours, waxes, and colours.

33-48. (canceled).